THE EVENING WORLD'S HOME MAGAZINE

TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 14, 1903.

A MODERN LEANDER.

BY ERNEST M'GAFFEY.

MARY DRAPER was well worth winning. Pretty, stylish, a good comrade, accomplished, and worth $100,000 in her own right. No wondr that Wadsworth loved her. To do him justice, he had fallen in love with her before he accidentally found out the fact of her riches, but as he figured it out, that was no objection.

Wadsworth and Miss Draper had met at a little, out-of-the-way town on the banks of the Mississippi. He was a lawyer, making about $1,500 a year, and a lazy, cheerful existence he was leading, as he admitted.

They parted at the close of her visit South without any understanding. Wadsworth had been perfectly business-like about his proposal, made before the fact of her fortune had been disclosed. He still said that if she would marry him that he would not be obliged to do anything so ridiculous as work, and that he and she could live ideal lives.

Miss Draper asked for time to consider. This he cheerfully assented to. It was June 15 when she left. "Make it sixty days," said Wadsworth, smilingly, as the train pulled out.

On Aug. 10, he got a letter from Miss Draper which read as follows: "I am coming up from New Orleans on the Illinois Central. The train stops at Newton for ten minutes. Will you take the ferry and come over. I wish to speak to you. MARY DRAPER."

On the night of Aug. 10, Wadsworth was at the ferry landing. It was a warm night, and he was dressed in a seersucker suit which weighed in the ounces. He looked at his watch. It was 8 o'clock. The train on the Central was due across the river at 10. He looked up at the road on the river bank and saw a darkey going by on a mule.

"What time does the ferry come over?" he called out.

"Ferry done busted, boss," was the reply. "Dey ain't gwine run her till Monday."

Wadsworth meditated. "I told her nothing could stop me," he mused. "Well, Wadsworth, here is the time to make good. If Leander could make six miles, I ought to go one."

"He stopped not for brake, and he stopped not for stone. He swam the Esk River when ford there was none." hummed Wadsworth, as he wrapped his low shoes in a handkerchief, put his suit together, tied it with his soft hat in a bundle and fastened the entire kit securely on his head. It weighed about three pounds, and Wadsworth congratulated himself on the lightness of summer clothing. Then he looked up at the star-strewn night, and the great moon slipping by, and walked into the current.

From where he stood to the other shore was a full mile, but the strength of the current was such that he had wisely calculated on swimming diagonally across the river and landing some distance from the shore at Newton. He had reached the middle of the river and the full volume of the current reached out and clasped him with the grip of a wrestler. He eased in his stroke and let the current take him downstream, working his way gradually toward the Illinois shore. It seemed to him that the strength of the water was abating, and that he had passed the worst of it. He was commencing to tire a little. It was a long swim.

Before the Illinois Central got to Newton Miss Draper had been talking to the conductor of the Pullman.

"We stop at Newton for ten minutes don't we?" she inquired.

"Yes, ma'am," said the conductor.

"There's a ferry there, I believe?" was Miss Draper's next question.

"It isn't running now," said the conductor.

"Are there any boats there?" said Miss Draper.

"Some at Newton," was the conductor's response.

"Are there none on the Missouri shore?" queried Miss Draper, anxiously.

"I don't think so," was his answer. "Were you expecting any one over?" he inquired.

"Why, yes," said Miss Draper, "that is—if the ferry was running."

"Well, the only way to cross to-night would be to swim across, and it isn't likely that anybody would try that," was the conductor's reply as he went forward.

At Newton she leaned from the car in a state of morbid fear. Yes, there was Wadsworth. He had seen her, too, and came rapidly up to the car. She came out on the platform, and the first word she said was: 'How did you get across the river? The ferry is broken, they told me—did you swim the river to meet me, Bob?"

It was the first time she had called him by any other name than Mr. Wadsworth. It was a good sign, he thought. She put her hand up to the back of his neck. It was still wet with the grip of the Father of Waters.

"Well, Mary, to be perfectly square with you, I did take a little swim to keep the date," he said.

She looked at him lovingly. "Have you got any money with you, Bob?" she asked.

"Why?" was Wadsworth's answer.

"Because I want you to take this train with me to Chicago. I will be your wife the minute we can find a minister. I was going to tell you to wait a year when you came her to-night, but you can have me now any time you want me. Oh, Bob, why did you run such a dreadful risk as that?"

A DEMAND FOR BEAUTY.

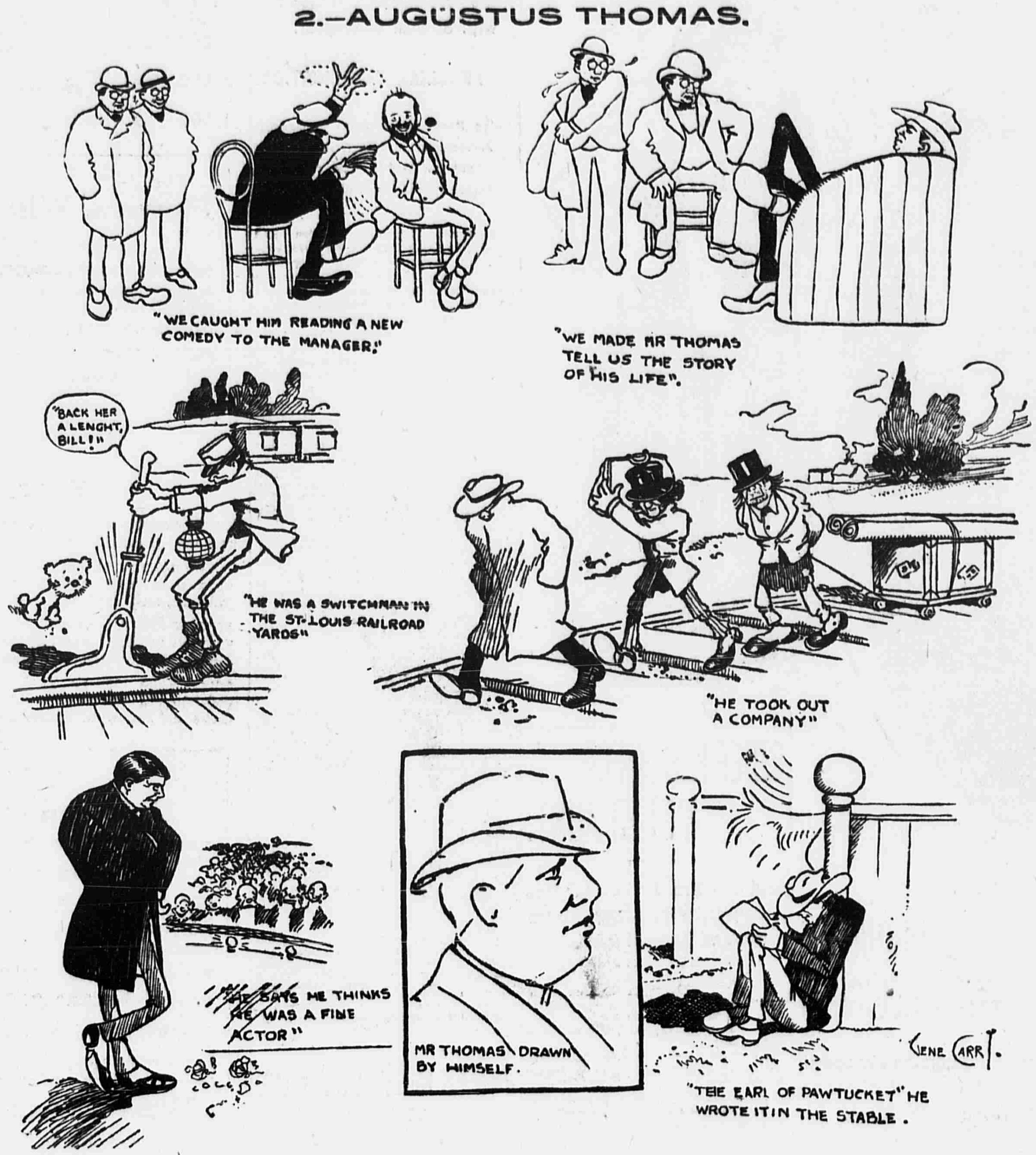
Mary is artistic,
 So the neighbors say;
Mary 'ants to keep the house
 Blooming as the May.
Pictures from the ceiling
 Clear down to the floor;
"Tidies" on the arm chair,
 And banners on the door.

Shouldn't be astonished
 Some fine day to note
Brilliant orchids broidered
 On my overcoat.
'Twouldn't be amazing
 If dear Mary should
Paint a bunch of daisies
 On each stick of kindling wood.
 —Washington Star.

MEN OF TO-DAY WHO MAKE THE WORLD LAUGH.

Interviews with Famous Humorists—Written by Roy L. McCardell ana Illustrated by the Caricaturist, Gene Carr.

2.—AUGUSTUS THOMAS.



"The Earl of Pawtucket's" Author Drifted by Easy Stages from Switch-Tending to Play-Writing.

AUGUSTUS THOMAS, the playwright, wit, ex-newspaper man, artist, after-dinner speaker, politician, semi-socialist and club fellow, is just a little too rotund to be called a many-sided man, despite the Crichton catalogue printed above.

"Gus is a good fellow," his friends say, and so say we all of us.

He is a big, smooth-faced, rosy-cheeked six-footer, and to corner him on any fair proposition is to win him your way, for, like all men big both mentally and physically, he is tractable. He even consented to this interview, providing he was not made to say "I did this, I did that." He balks at the personal pronoun like all men do who are of modest mind.

We caught him in Kirke La Shelle's office reading a new comedy to the manager who put on his "Arizona," that bully Western play of alkali dust and subtle atmosphere, and the contemporaneous comedy, "The Earl of Pawtucket."

We sat and listened to part of the new comedy, but promised not to print a word of the play or the discussion that attended its reading. But it read fine.

Then we went over to the cafe of the Hotel Normandie and made Mr. Thomas tell us the story of his life.

His real name is Augustus Thomas, and he was born and raised in Missouri.

In his teens he was a switchman in the St. Louis railroad yards. Hence his academic fraternity is the Order of Railroad Switchmen and his college cry is "Back her a length, Bill!"

But even in the days when he was the popular young switchman, envied by all the younger generation who hung around the freight-house learning to chew tobacco, he was addicted to playwrighting and used to concoct stirring dramas that taught great moral lessons.

These would be played for the benefit of the relief fund in Miller's Hall, over the Americus Cafe, with a cast of stalwart trainmen and an audience of the same.

Then he got in the box-office of a local theatre and adapted Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's little story of "Editha's Burglar" for stage purposes.

Then he took out a company to play it, and who do you think were among the merry band? Why, Della Fox—she played Editha—and Edgar Smith, the man who now writes the Weber & Fields burlesques.

Nowadays Edgar Smith looks like W. J. Bryan, but in those days—and we have Mr. Thomas's word for it—Edgar was a matinee idol. He was a good actor, a slim, handsome, curly-haired darling of the gods and the matinee girls.

Charles Frohman saw "Editha's Burglar" played by this little company in a small theatre in New Orleans. He said it was just what he wanted for a curtain-raiser for the Madison Square Theatre.

Up to this time Augustus Thomas had been bombarding the New York managers with letters telling them he had just the plays they wanted. But he could not show them, although he was from Missouri, and they never even answered his letters. So don't be discouraged, you who write plays.

Mr. Thomas still has these plays concerning which he wrote the New York managers, but he says he hasn't the nerve to show them now. He sees how bad they are. Although in those days he could not be convinced but what they were what the world awaited, for didn't the railroad boys applaud them vociferously?

Nowadays Mr. Thomas (consider he is telling this, but that we are cutting out the "I's," according to promise) writes two plays fresh every year.

When he writes a play about a State he goes to that State to get the atmosphere.

He went to Alabama and stayed some months before he wrote "Alabama." And it was the same with "Arizona," "In Mizzoura" and "Colorado." The Missouri instance was only a refresher, for, as stated, he was born and raised there.

Mr. Thomas says it is the love interest and the atmosphere that make a play. "Colorado" failed because the love interest was spread out too thin. It tried to portray heart interest for four sets of lovers. For "Colorado" he spent three months in the wilds of the Centennial State. He went prospecting, was in a claim-jumping melee, roughed it, slept in shacks, lived on salt pork and bad biscuit and had a hard time generally—and the play failed.

Well, others have made amends, which is mighty consoling.

Mr. Thomas is forty-four years of age. "Editha's Burglar" was produced in 1886, and Mr. Thomas has been playwrighting exclusively since.

Up to then, after making a flying switch from the yard engine, he had been a man in the box-office and an actor. He won't admit he is the best playwright in the world, but he says he thinks he was a fine actor. He played leading man, Arthur Warburton, the much-put-upon hero, who is cleared of crime, and wins the girl who always believed in his innocence, despite the villainous machinations of Richard Throckmorton, fiend in human form, in the last act.

He lives at New Rochelle and is thoroughly domesticated. Late in the summer he goes to a cottage he has at East Hampton, L. I. It was down there, last summer, he wrote "The Earl of Pawtucket."

He wrote it in the stable. That is why he has made the leading character, which D'Orsay plays, a well-groomed man.

Mr. Thomas is a reformed Republican, believes in municipal ownership, has slight leanings toward Socialism and is now an unterrified Democrat. He is a splendid speaker, political or post prandial, and it is whispered—he didn't do the whispering—that he will be the next candidate for Mayor of New Rochelle on the Democratic ticket.

He can draw pictures, too. Here is one of himself he committed during the I-less interview.

ROY L. M'CARDELL.

THE YOUNGEST CHAUFFEUR.

Columbus, Ind., claims to have the smallest automobile and the youngest chauffeur on record. The boy is Hubert Ogden, son of the local Western Union Telegraph manager. He is only three-and-a-half years old, and he has already mastered the simple mechanism of his auto so completely as to be able to spin along the streets of his native city without mishaps. The auto itself has a "live" rear axle carrying the differential gear with a band brake on it. A one-quarter horse power petrol motor, carried in front, supplies the motive force. The auto's body is 35 inches long and 6 inches wide, on 20-inch wheels. The maximum speed is seven miles an hour.

HOW SOME NEW YORK WOMEN PAY THEIR POKER DEBTS.

With Bell Boy or Janitor as Emissary, They Often Raise Money on Jewelry and Furs.

IS the New York woman a confirmed gambler? This is the superlative degree of censure that has been cast at her door. As a smoker of cigarettes, a devotee of the cherry-trimmed cocktail, she has come in for her share of the reformers' criticism; but there are a few facts concerning her gaming propensities that have heretofore never been disclosed, and which show the grim determination to "stay in the game" that possesses the feminine mind.

A leading New York pawnbroker, whose uptown place of business is graced only by patrons who have valuable possessions to pawn, tells of constant visitations to his establishment of messenger boys, bell boys, porters and janitors who come hurrying in with jewels on which they are in a great hurry to raise money at once. In his vaults are rings and bracelets, brooches and pins innumerable, torn hurriedly from the fingers and gowns of some card-crazed woman, whose interest in the game cannot be appeased even when her last penny is gone.

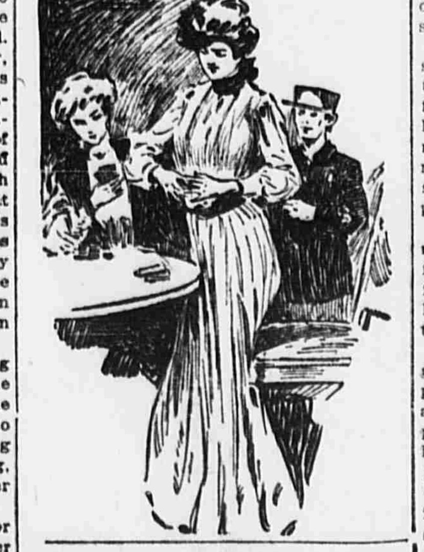
The poor east side woman pawning her wedding ring for bread is not the sympathy-harrowing victim of the "three balls" who brings her mite to this pawnbroker's bank, but the young matron with her engagement ring, "soaked" to raise money to pay her poker debts.

In their rooms in the family hotels or apartment houses these women gather to try their luck at cards. At first it often starts with a little friendly game. The money means nothing to them; it is just the fun of the thing. The pastime phase, however, soon disappears, and a real live passion for the game itself supplants the former friendly sentiment. When it comes to a woman parting with her very wedding ring the trivial phase of women's poker parties disappears.

In one of the uptown hotels a lively and sensation-developing game was held not long ago. A party of four had met to spend the hours in a game with a fifty-cent limit. One young woman, whose face plainly showed the intense excitement under which she was working, stood her losses with the grim hope for future gains that marks the inveterate gambler. Every cent she possessed was soon lost. Two others were almost as badly off. In the hope that luck would turn her way she called the bell boy, and taking off a diamond brooch sent him to the uptown pawnshop for money with which to recoup her losses. The game continued, and still she lost. Her jewelry was finally all gone but the three-stone diamond engagement ring, in which was inscribed her name and that of her husband. It was with a desperate hope that she sent this too to the pawnbroker.

When the young matron who had pawned every bit of jewelry she possessed, down to her engagement ring, left the apartments of her friend she was followed by the bell boy. He had read the inscription on the wedding ring and scented a possibility of blackmail. The jewelry had been pawned in an assumed name, so the bell boy followed her home. The next morning she was surprised by a visit from her messenger to the pawnshop, who threatened to expose her foolish act to her husband if she did not give him a sufficient amount to pay for his silence.

The employing of bell boys and porters in the capacity of pawnshop go-betweens has more than once led to innumerable thefts on the part of these attendants. Knowing that the pawnbrokers are accustomed to ladies sending messengers



with articles to pawn, stolen goods are often accepted without suspicion. The temptation which is thrown in the way of unprincipled servants cannot be lightly estimated.

"The trouble about women playing poker is that they have not the cool, business head of men that will keep them in check," said a woman poker expert to an Evening World reporter. They forget the practical side of the question and lose control of their reasoning power.

"When a woman observes that she has a good hand she forgets the possibility of another superior hand being held by one of the other players. She bets high. If she is raised her supposed gaming intuition prompts her to raise still higher. In consequence she loses every cent, and her messengers begin their trip to the Sign of the Three Balls.

"The amount of jewelry that is pawned cannot be imagined, and souvenirs and the most sentimental tokens are parted with in the distorted vision which women assume in playing cards.

"A queer incident happened not long ago at a poker game in one of the fashionable hotels, when a wealthy young widow entered a game and lost seventy dollars. She did not seem to realize that the debt was one of honor, and when she lost rose from the table and passed it all off as a joke. She did not really consider the game in anything but the light of amusement, but her sister players were enraged, and as a result the loser was ostracized fro mthe poker-playing set entirely, and her name has been stricken from the calling list of a large number of women who heard of her action and considered her in the same light men do a card sharp. Of course, the money could not be legally collected from her, so no public action was taken. Only infinite scorn followed her. The woman could not imagine what had caused her sudden drop from favor, but her ostracism is as complete as though her action had been as significant as the Tranby Croft scandal.

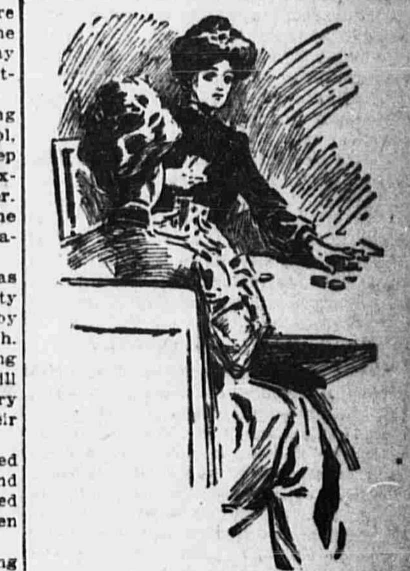
"The pawnshop phase of the gambling mania among women is one which is growing in importance every day."

"Women employ messengers and bell boys with such regularity that we have on an average several calls every day," said an uptown pawnbroker.

"Lace handkerchiefs with the perfume still scenting them, or perhaps a little tinge of cigarettes; lace neck-pieces, furs, as well as jewelry, have been sent here by messengers who sometimes make a malicious remark upon the progress of the game which has deprived some fair player of her wearing apparel.

"The jewelry which is brought by messenger and bell boy to be pawned for woman card-players ranges in value from diamond rings, worth $75, to bracelets and brooches which run up into the thousand dollars.

"It all depends upon the limit of the game and the finances of the woman player, but the patrons of my place are all women of wealth. Few women with poverty written on their faces come here, but the state of mind which prompts many a fair gambler to part with her jewelry in her intense interest in the game reflects as much vital anguish as does the east side mother



who pawns her wedding ring on the Bowery to buy food for her starving children."

The reporter was shown through the vaults on one such pawn-shop, where were disclosed a hoard of valuables of the aforementioned order. Few of them were of the sort with which actual poverty usually forces a woman to part.